Purulia pump storage projects in West Bengal

1670. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether NHPC had agreed to participate in building up of Purulia pump storage project in West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the present status of participation of NHPC in the above project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) for incorporating a Joint Venture Company (JVC) named National Pumped Storage Development Corporation Ltd. to undertake execution, operation and transmission of the Purulia Pumped Storage Scheme having an installed capacity of 900 MW. The JVC will have an authorized share capital of Rs. 600 crores to be contributed by NHPC and GoWB in the ratio of 67:33.

Ministry of Power is in the process of obtaining the approval of the . Government of India for formation of the above JVC and for investment aoproval for implementation of the project at an estimated cost of Rs. 3129.44 crores (at November, 2003 price level) including Interest During Construction of Rs. 454.68 crores along with the associated transmission system.

Desert area in Gujarat

1671. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how much was desert area in square kilometres in Gujarat at the time of formation of a seperate State of Gujarat in 1960;

(b) whether it is a fact that deserts are fast progressing in the areas of North Gujarat and Kutch rendering agricultural land useless;

(c) whether it is also a fact that at present desert in Gujarat is estimated at 50,368 square kilometers; and

(d) how much land area is affected by salinity ingress in coastal areas of Gujarat, rendering agricultural land useless?